DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 078 252 AC 014 430

TITLE	Better Group Meetings: An Aid to Better Management. Supervisory Development Conference Series. Training Guide.
INSTITUTION	Veterans Administration, Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO	VA-TG-5-18-1
PUB DATE	May 59
NOTE	43p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Conferences; Federal Programs; *Group Dynamics; Guides; *Leadership Training; *Management Education; Professional Personnel; *Supervisory Training

ABSTRACT

A guide to conducting group meetings is presented. It contains the following sections. I. Participating in Meetings: A. Purposes: (1) to discuss the uses and benefits of the meeting as a tool of group participation and get an appreciation of meetings as dynamic situations; (2) to define the word "meeting" and discuss the uses of meetings; and (3) to examine the responsibilities of meeting members; B. Content of Session: Introduction; What Is a Meeting?; Why Meetings?; Responsibilities of Meeting Members; and Closing; and C. Appendices: A. People in a meeting are not static, but DYNAMIC; and B. Responsibilities of Meeting Members. II. Leading Meetings: A. Purposes: (1) to discuss the role of the meeting leader; and (2) to examine the various steps in a meeting, tracing them through the determination of need, the preparation, the conducting of the meeting, and the follow-up; B. Content of Session: The Functions of the Meeting Leader; Meeting Steps; Planning the Meeting; Leading the Meeting; and Closing; and C. Appendices: Planning the Meeting; and Leading the Meeting. III. The Progress of Meetings: A. Purposes: (1) to discuss methods that are effective in influencing the progress of meetings--statements, visual aids, questions, and the group; and (2) to discuss the characteristics of VA staff meeting; B. Content of Session: Introduction; Statements; Visual Aids; Questions; The Group; Characteristics of VA Staff Meetings; and Closing; and C. Appendices: A. Self-Appraisal List for Meeting Leaders; B. Bibliography on Meetings; and C. Suggestions for Practice Meetings. (For related documents, see AC 014 431-434.) (CK)

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

TRAINING GUIDE

TG5-18-1

ED 078252

Supervisory Development Conference Series

BETTER GROUP MEETINGS:

An Aid to Better Management

AC014430

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL
VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

MAY 1959

CONTENTS

		PAGE
General Information and Suggestions for the Conference Leader		iii
SESSION I	Participating in Meetings	1
II	Leading Meetings	13
III	The Progress of Meetings	25

GENERAL INFORMATION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE LEADER

The information in TG 5-18, Guide for the Supervisory Development Conference Series, applies to the three sessions of "Better Group Meetings: An Aid to Better Management". In addition, the following information should be noted.

1. Use of the Film, "All I Need Is A Conference"

The film, "All I Need Is A Conference", which is available in the VA Film Library, may be integrated with the training sessions. Two methods of use are as follows:

a. Three Sessions

If three sessions are used, the presentation and discussion of the film may be used in place of Session III as outlined in this guide. The following time schedule is suggested:

(1) Introduction: 5 to 10 minutes. Tell the members to watch for different types of personalities and the way the leader handles them.

(2) Presentation of film: 25 minutes

(3) Discussion: Devote the remaining time to discussion of the film. Because the film is being used as an alternative form of Session III center the discussion on the problem of dealing with the personalities around the meeting table. Use pages 26 through 37 of the manual accompanying the film.

b. Four Sessions

If four sessions are used, the film may be presented in a fourth session. A time schedule similar to that above can be used. The discussion portion can be used as a general summary of the first three sessions with emphasis on the human relations aspect.

2. Practice Meetings

As the guide itself stresses, only with experience can you acquire the art of meeting participation. Practice in taking part in meetings is an essential part of this unit. Appendix III-C gives suggestions for conducting such practice meetings.

SESSION I

PARTICIPATING IN MEETINGS

SUMMARY SHEET

A. PURPOSES

1. To discuss the uses and benefits of the meeting as a tool of group participation and to get an appreciation of meetings as dynamic situations.
2. To define the word "meeting" and to discuss the uses of meetings.
3. To examine the responsibilities of meeting members.

B. CONTENT OF SESSION

Topics for discussion	Pages
Introduction	2
What is a Meeting?	2
Why Meetings?	3
Responsibilities of Meeting Members	5
Closing	7

C. APPENDICES

Title	Pages
I-A People in a meeting are not static, but DYNAMIC	9
I-B (HO#1) Responsibilities of Meeting Members	11

SESSION I

PARTICIPATING IN MEETINGS

INTRODUCTION

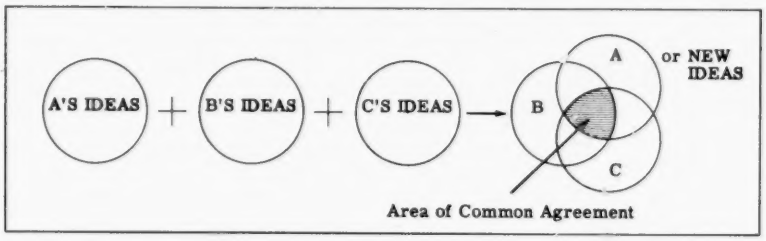
Topical outline	Discussion Material
Introduce general topic	The series of conferences we are starting today are for the purpose of exploring the general topic "Better Group Meetings: An Aid to Better Management".
	BETTER GROUP MEETINGS: AN AID TO BETTER MANAGEMENT
Explain your role	My function as the Conference Leader will be to assist by participating with you in the discussions and attempting to stimulate discussion by submitting questions to the group.
Introduce topic of session	In this first session we shall be concerned with the problem of how meeting members can participate effectively. But first let's discuss meetings in general for a while.

WHAT IS A MEETING?

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Uses of meetings	**Q. What are some of the uses to which meetings may be put?** - To present a body of new information - To answer questions - To communicate purpose and attitude - To explain procedure - To show operations - To develop new skills, habits, and attitudes - To solve problems - To formulate programs - To develop policy - To get ideas - To exchange opinions
Definition of a meeting	**Q. In the light of these uses how would you define a meeting?** *Give the members time to work out a definition on which there is fairly general agreement. An example of the type of definition which they may develop is as follows:* - A meeting is a group of people brought together under leadership to accomplish one or more of the following purposes: to receive or exchange information, to receive instruction, or to solve a problem.

WHY MEETINGS?

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Benefits of meetings	**Q. What benefits can be obtained from meetings?** - They use the knowledge and experience of the group - They assure better understanding of what is to be done and how it is to be done - They increase employee cooperation - They build job and organizational loyalty - They increase employees' sense of belonging - They create feelings of importance and strengthen self-confidence - They contribute toward development of employee abilities *To illustrate the benefit of using the knowledge and experience of the group you may wish to use the visual aid below.*
Emphasize group participation	These benefits emphasize the point that, regardless of the purpose of the meeting, there should be as much group participation as possible. There will be certain limitations imposed by the topic and the nature of the meeting. However, the more closely the goal of maximum possible group participation is approached, the more likely will be the success of the meeting. As an illustration of the tendency to forget this principle there is the story of the Hollywood executive who assembled his staff for a "meeting". After talking for a very long time, without a word having been said by anyone else during the session, he sighed happily and said, "Thank you, gentlemen. It always does me good to get together with you and exchange ideas".
People in a meeting are not static, but dynamic	**Q. It has been said that people in a meeting are not static, but dynamic. What are some of the ways in which people at a meeting differ?** - They differ in the feelings and attitudes they bring to a meeting - They differ in the way they participate - They differ in the ability to communicate and to receive communication



- They differ in their ability to work with others effectively
- Groups of three or more persons tend to break into sub-groups
- Group atmosphere differs from one group to another
- Members and groups are not constant in feelings, attitudes, etc. They change even during the course of a meeting
- Members are affected by outside influences

If the last point isn't brought out by the group, mention it yourself.

The invisible committee and hidden agenda

Q. **These outside influences are sometimes referred to as the "invisible committee and the hidden agenda". What are some of these outside influences?**

- Type of supervision under which a person is working, i.e., restrictive or permissive
- Resistance to change
- Desire to dominate group
- Dislike of other persons at the meeting
- Fear of a member that taking part in a group discussion may lessen his influence
- Financial problems
- Family problems
- Health problems

To illustrate the point that people in a meeting are not static, but dynamic, you may wish to use the visual aid and explanation shown in Appendix I-A. It can be prepared in advance or developed on the blackboard.

Not understanding the people around the table and not knowing how to work with them are common causes for the failure of so many meetings. The dynamic aspect of groups makes it more difficult, but not impossible, to obtain the benefits of meetings and the advantages of group participation.

Considering the dynamic aspect of groups

Q. **What should a meeting member or leader keep in mind about the dynamic aspect of groups?**

- Don't try to be a psychologist or sociologist
- Try to be sensitive to group behavior
- Try to realize that his attitude toward other members of the group will largely determine the success of a meeting

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEETING MEMBERS

Topical outline	Discussion Material
	For our next area of discussion let's change from considering the meeting as a whole and concentrate on the responsibilities of meeting members.
	RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEETING MEMBERS
	We have stressed the meeting as a group effort. Its success rests not only on the meeting leader but on the meeting member as well.
Primary responsibility of the meeting member	**Q. What would you say is the primary responsibility of the meeting member?**
	- Willingness to work with others
	- Cooperation
Preparation	**Q. What can a member do to prepare himself to attend a meeting?**
	- Note down the time and place in a way to be reminded of it before the meeting
	- If requested to bring certain charts, data, etc., make arrangements to gather them before the meeting. Keep them simple.
	- Come prepared to discuss the topic. Have questions and suggestions in mind
	a. Make notes of points he does not understand
	b. Think of questions he wants to ask or disagreements he wants cleared up
	c. Make notes of ideas he wants to present
	- Arrange his schedule so he will be on time for the meeting
Ways of participating	**Q. What are the different ways in which a meeting member participates?**
	- By speaking
	- By the way he listens
	- By the attitudes or manners he shows
	- By the ways in which he thinks
Listening	**Q. What can a member do to be a good listener?**
	- Give undivided attention to the discussion
	- Listen thoughtfully
	- Try to get the meaning the speaker is trying to convey
	- Listen before he questions

Attitudes or manners

Q. What are the proper attitudes or manners for a member to bring to a meeting?

- Remember that he shares the responsibility for the success or failure of the meeting
- Discuss problems involving his work without becoming defensive and touchy
- Subordinate individual interests to the common goal
- Try to understand the other fellow's point of view
- Be tolerant of opinions with which he disagrees
- Remember the unseen audience which each member brings with him

Thinking

Q. What are some of the ways of thinking that make a good meeting member?

- Consider his opinions and ideas, not his emotions
- Integrate into his thinking worthwhile new ideas advanced by other members
- Use his thinking to help the leader keep the discussion lively, balanced, and forward moving
  a. Develop ideas and questions that keep the discussion moving toward the objective
  b. Consider causes, difficulties, and results of past actions
  c. Seek common areas of agreement and find ways to reconcile conflicts
  d. Develop recommendations and possible solutions and conclusions

Speaking

Q. What are some of the things for a member to remember when speaking?

- Give the group the benefit of his experience. Don't clam up - contribute
- Speak his mind freely, clearly, and concisely
- Keep to the point
- Speak to the group and not only to the meeting leader
- Avoid monopolizing the discussion
- Ask questions when there is something he doesn't understand If he doesn't understand, there are probably others in the same boat
- If he disagrees, say so and state his reasons. This helps to identify the points of difference

Follow-ups

Q. What are some of the follow-ups that might take place after a meeting and what would they require on the part of the members?

- Taking action

- Taking action: The group has decided that a certain action is to be taken. Do the members understand what is expected of them?

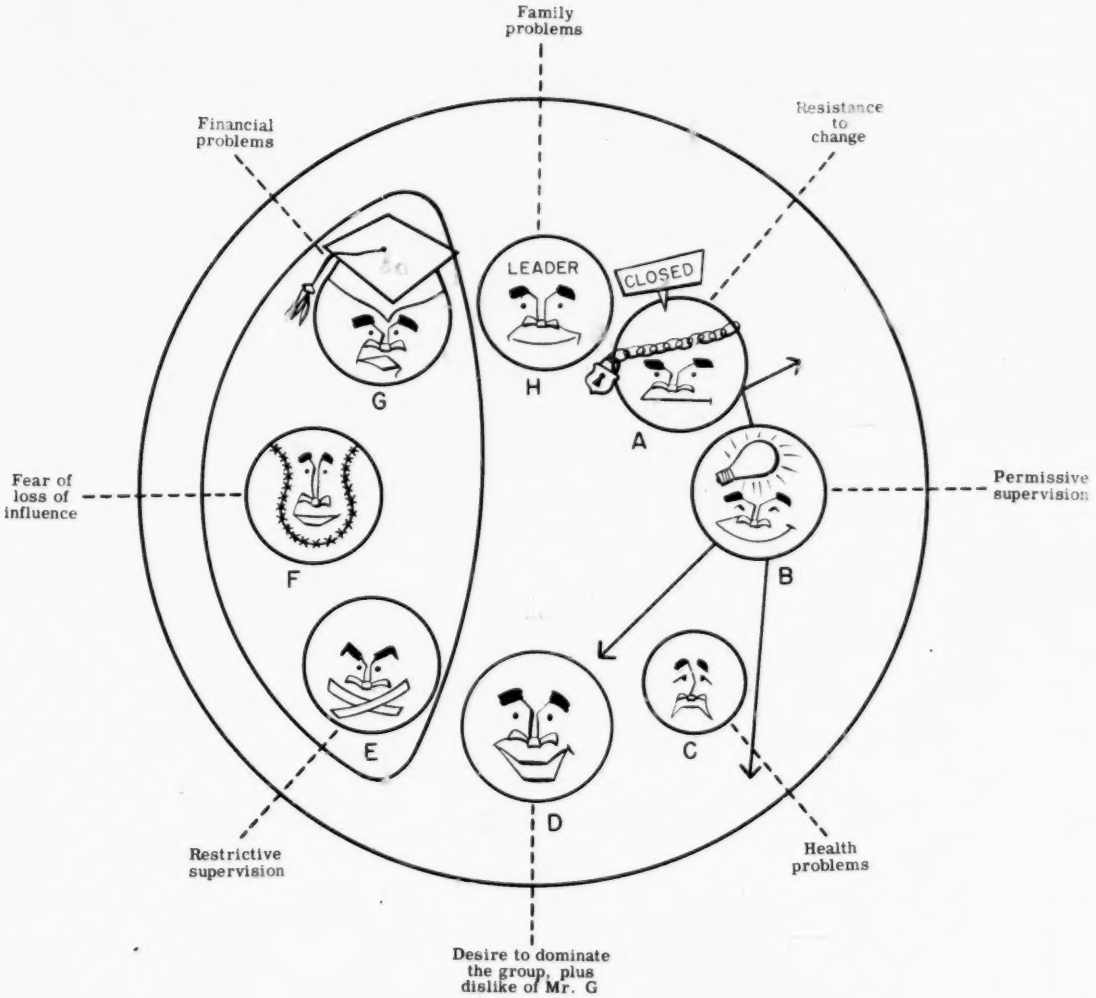
- Planning	- Planning: The group has decided that certain planning must be done. Do the members know what their participation in this planning will be?
- Recommending	- Recommending: The group decides to recommend a certain course of action. Have the members considered what will have to be done, if the recommendation is accepted?
- Discussing further	- Discussing further: The group is unable to reach a decision and decides on further discussion. Do the members know what common agreements, if any, were arrived at? Do they have sufficient information to try to work out possible acceptable solutions before the next meeting?

CLOSING

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Summary	*Ask one or more members to summarize the session, if time permits.* We have seen that the task of a meeting member is far from a simple one. The things we have discussed in this session will help, but they are not rigid rules or formulas. The important thing is actually trying them out. Only through experience can you acquire the art of being a good meeting member.
HANDOUT	*Distribute HO #1 (Appendix I-B), "Responsibilities of Meeting Members". The handout will probably differ in some respects from the discussion. Point out that the conclusions in this and other handouts that will be distributed are not necessarily more correct than those the group reached, but are intended to stimulate further thought.* In our next session we will discuss the role of the meeting leader.
Close session	*Announce time and place of next session. Close session.*

APPENDIX I-A
(TG 5-18-1)

People in a meeting are not static, but DYNAMIC



(See next page for explanation of chart.)

This chart illustrates the fact that people in a meeting are not static, but DYNAMIC.

1. Members differ in feelings and attitudes: Mr. A has come to the meeting with a closed mind; Mr. B, on the other hand, is the "initiator" type who keeps bringing up new ideas.

2. Group members differ in the way they participate: As indicated by the size of the circles Mr. C contributes very little while Mr. D tries to monoplize the discussion.

3. Members differ in the ability to communicate and to receive communication: Mr. E has come to the meeting with sealed lips and communicates very little. Mr. B, the initiator, communicates quite a bit but, as the arrows indicate, the reception varies.

4. Groups differ in their ability to work together effectively: Mr. F is the foul ball in this meeting and is keeping the group from getting started.

5. Groups of three or more persons tend to break into sub-groups: Mr. G is an expert in the field the group is discussing. He has rallied a little sub-group of his own, as indicated by the line which separates E, F, and G from the rest of the group.

6. Group atmosphere differs from one group to another: This atmosphere depends a great deal on the leader, Mr. H.

7. Members and groups are not constant in feelings, attitudes, etc.: They change during the course of a meeting. For example, if the topic should change one of the other members could become the expert in place of Mr. G.

8. There may be an invisible committee and a hidden agenda: In addition to the influence of the persons sitting at the table, there are outside influences which represent an invisible committee. These are shown by the words outside the big circle. These outside influences cause feelings and motivations which the members bring with them and which result in members, or even the entire group, approaching the task with a certain slant. This creates a hidden agenda.

APPENDIX I-B
(TG 5-18-1)

HO #1

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEETING MEMBERS

A meeting is a group or cooperative effort. Its success rests not only on the meeting leader but upon the meeting members as well. The responsibilities of the members include preparation, listening, attitudes, manners, thinking, and speaking.

1. Preparation

   a. When notified of a meeting note down the time and place in a way to be reminded of it before the meeting.

   b. Gather necessary materials before the meeting. Keep them simple.

   c. Come prepared to discuss the topic. Have questions and suggestions in mind.

   d. Be on time for the meeting.

2. Listening

   a. Give undivided attention to the discussion.

   b. Listen thoughtfully. Try to get the meaning the speaker is trying to convey.

   c. Listen before you question.

3. Attitudes and Manners

   a. Remember that you share the responsibility for the success or failure of the meeting.

   b. Discuss problems involving your work without becoming defensive or touchy.

   c. Subordinate individual interests to the common goal.

   d. Try to understand the other fellow's point of view.

   e. Be tolerant of opinions with which you disagree.

   f. Remember the unseen audience which each member brings with him and which may cause reactions you didn't expect.

4. Thinking

   a. Consider your opinions and ideas, not your emotions.

   b. Integrate into your thinking worthwhile new ideas advanced by other members.

   c. Use your thinking to help the leader keep the discussion lively, balanced, and forward moving.

      (1) Develop ideas and questions that keep the discussion moving toward the objective.

      (2) Consider causes, difficulties, and results of past actions.

      (3) Seek common areas of agreement and find ways to reconcile conflicts.

      (4) Develop recommendations and possible solutions and conclusions.

5. Speaking

a. Give the group the benefit of your experience. Don't clam up -- contribute.

b. Speak your mind freely, clearly, and concisely.

c. Keep to the point.

d. Speak to the group and not only to the meeting leader.

e. Avoid monopolizing the discussion.

(1) Give others an opportunity to speak.

(2) Subdue any desire to show off or make a speech.

(3) Don't interrupt others.

(4) Shun private side discussions.

f. If there is something you don't understand, ask questions. If you don't understand, there are probably others in the same boat.

g. If you disagree, say so and state your reasons. This helps to identify the points of difference.

SESSION II

LEADING MEETINGS

SUMMARY SHEET

A. PURPOSES

1. To discuss the role of the meeting leader.

2. To examine the various steps in a meeting, tracing them through the determination of need, the preparation, the conducting of the meeting, and the follow-up.

B. CONTENT OF SESSION

Topics for discussion	Pages
The Functions of the Meeting Leader - - - - - - - - -	14
Meeting Steps -	15
Planning the Meeting - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	15
Leading the Meeting - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	17
Closing -	19

C. APPENDICES

Title	Pages
II-A (HO #2) Planning the Meeting - - - - - - - - - -	21
II-B (HO #3) Leading the Meeting - - - - - - - - - -	23

SESSION II

LEADING MEETINGS

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE MEETING LEADER

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Introduction	In the first session we were concerned with the responsibilities of the meeting members. In this session we shall be concerned with the role of the meeting leader and how he prepares for, participates in, and leads a meeting. LEADING MEETINGS
Discussion is of value to both meeting leaders and members	**Q. Discussion of this topic can, of course, be of value to those who are called upon to lead meetings. In what ways can it also be of value to those who participate in meetings as members?** - It enables them to understand better the role they play as members - The member can occasionally become the leader, as when he says, "What have we agreed on up till now?", or when he asks, "Aren't we getting off the track?"
The functions of the meeting leader	**Q. What are the functions of the meeting leader?** - To <u>motivate</u> each member to think of the group as sharing responsibility for the success or failure of the meeting - To <u>stimulate</u> members to think and discuss - To <u>encourage</u> members to be active contributors rather than passive listeners - To <u>assist</u> the group to convert diverse thinking into unified ideas and plans - To <u>promote</u> and secure group effort **Q. These functions apply, of course, to the problem solving type of meeting. Do they also apply to the type where information or instruction is given?** - They do apply - although in lesser degree - because even in the informational and instructional type of meeting the leader should encourage as much group participation as possible **Q. In carrying out his functions what is the most important thing for the leader to remember?** - He should remember that he is dealing with people, and that his attitude towards these people will largely determine the results he gets

MEETING STEPS

Topical outline	Discussion Material
	Let's trace the steps you go through in planning and leading a meeting. Then we'll go back and discuss them in more detail. **Q. What are the steps in planning and leading a meeting?** 1. Determine need for meeting 2. Prepare for meeting 3. Present the topic 4. Present or get facts and ideas 5. Evaluate facts and ideas 6. Draw conclusions 7. Develop plan 8. Follow-up **Q. Do all of these steps apply to the informational and instructional meetings?** - The informational meeting normally stops after the presentation of facts and ideas - The instructional meeting normally stops after the evaluation of facts and ideas *The group may, of course, decide on a different set of steps from those above. In such case adjust the questions that follow in accordance with the particular steps selected by the group. In any event point out that discussion won't always follow the logical order of the steps, but more likely will skip around.*

PLANNING THE MEETING

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Determining need	**Q. Going back to the first step, what questions might you ask yourself about the topic in order to determine whether to hold a meeting?** - Is there a need or a problem? Is the information already available or has a study already been made? - Does it, i.e., the topic, lend itself to the meeting method? For example, does it require long study and fact finding? A meeting cannot economically do this sort of thing. Am I sure that calling a meeting is not simply a way of postponing a decision which should not be postponed? - Does it lend itself to a less expensive method? Meetings are expensive and I must balance this cost against the potential benefits. - Has the right climate for productive meetings been established? For example, if participation has previously been discouraged, suddenly asking the group to work together on a problem will probably yield little or no results.

- If the problem solving meeting is indicated, am I willing to accept or consider the thinking of the group? If I first solve the problem to my own satisfaction, and then try to lure the group to the same conclusion, the deceit will usually be obvious, and the results will be bad.

- Is the topic timely? Is this the appropriate time to tackle it or should it be deferred? Can the action be postponed until the recommendations of the meeting group are obtained?

- Is the topic workable? Can it be adequately covered or should I limit it to certain phases or portions?

- Is the topic one that I and the members can do something about? Can we take action, make a decision, make recommendations, or even decide that nothing should be done?

Preparing for a meeting

Q. What are the things you should do in preparing to lead a meeting?

- Prepare yourself

  1. Assemble and screen information

  2. Prepare outline in such detail and in such manner as the particular meeting may require. This may include one or more of the following:

     a. The topic or over-all objective
     b. Immediate objectives
     c. Definitions
     d. A prepared opening statement
     e. Points which may be discussed
     f. Questions which may be asked
     g. Examples and board work

  3. Assemble material. This may include the following:

     a. Written materials - instructions, orders, pamphlets, handouts, case studies, skits, etc.
     b. Graphic materials - charts, diagrams, graphs, posters, etc.
     c. Films, film strips, and slides

- Prepare the members

  1. Select the members

  2. Notify the members and give them the necessary details, such as date and time, place, persons attending, topic of meeting, etc.

- Prepare the meeting place

  1. Check the room facilities - availability of room, heating, light, ventilation, arrangement of tables and chairs

  2. Check arrangements for demonstration materials - blackboard or chart pad; chalk, eraser, or crayon; film, film strips or slides; projection equipment

  3. Check the facilities for convenience of members - pencils, papers, ash trays, name plates

	- Adjust the preparation in accordance with the meeting. Many meetings are informal and the preparation will not usually take very much time. However, it is important and should not be overlooked.

LEADING THE MEETING

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Presenting the topic	**Q. What are some of the things to keep in mind in presenting the topic?** - Start on time - Put the group at ease by 1. using a friendly, informal manner, 2. speaking in a normal, conversational voice, 3. greeting the group cordially, 4. making sure the members are acquainted, and 5. telling an appropriate story. - Explain the plan of procedure, if it has not been established by previous meetings - Arouse the interest of the members 1. Appeal to the members in terms of their own self-interest 2. Appeal to the members' loyalty to the organization, to the group, and to the objectives being served 3. Show need and desire for their thinking and cooperation 4. Make it clear that the meeting is to be a group effort 5. Chart the amount of experience and show the amount of experience that is being brought on the topic 6. Show interest. To gain the interest of the members the leader must show enthusiasm himself
Presenting or getting facts and ideas	**Q. In presenting facts, as in an informational meeting, what are some of the points to observe?** - Emphasize important facts and ideas - Show the relationship between ideas - Use expressive words which are within the vocabulary of the group **Q. In getting facts and ideas what are some of the things to do?** - Start the discussion by 1. asking a question on which someone is sure to have something to say

	2. using demonstrations, illustrations, examples, motion pictures, film strips, slides, posters, etc. 3. using an interesting case - Keep the discussion moving and on the beam by 1. using questions that will keep the discussion forward moving 2. restating and rephrasing opinions or thoughts expressed, when necessary, for emphasis or clarity 3. summarizing or having the group summarize frequently 4. analyzing the progress of the discussion - Use the thinking of all the members *If this point is mentioned, tell the group that it will be discussed in more detail at the next session.* - Use the blackboard
Evaluating facts and ideas	**Q. What are the points to observe in evaluating facts and ideas?** - Avoid obvious experting - Encourage the group to weigh and analyze facts and ideas - Get group agreement - Summarize frequently
Drawing conclusions	**Q. How do you go about drawing conclusions?** - Consider possible alternatives - Select alternative
Developing a plan	**Q. What are some of the things to consider in developing a plan?** - Determine plan of action - Determine responsibilities in carrying out the plan of action - Final summary - Close on time 1. If there is important unfinished business, defer it for another meeting. 2. If the purpose of the meeting is achieved before the end of the scheduled period, bring the meeting to a close. Don't protract it simply to fill in the allotted time.
Following-up	**Q. What are some of the actions that might be required in following-up?** Prepare a report if it serves a usefull purpose and only in such detail as indicated by the meeting

	- Complete follow-up assignments such as taking action, planning, recommending, or discussing further

CLOSING

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Summary	*Ask one or more members to summarize the session, if time permits.* We might sum up this session briefly by stating that the job of the meeting leader is to help the members to apply cooperatively their experience and knowledge or, to promote and secure group effort. Even in those meetings where the conclusions are largely predetermined, the leader should encourage the members to develop the topic as much as possible. The caution mentioned at the end of the first session applies to this session also - that is, the things that we have discussed are guides, not rigid rules or formulas.
HANDOUTS	*Distribute HO #2 (Appendix II-A), "Planning the Meeting", and HO #3 (Appendix II-B), "Leading the Meeting".*
	In our next session we will discuss the progress of meetings.
Close session	*Announce time and place of next session. Close session.*

APPENDIX II-A
(TG 5-18-1)

HO #2

PLANNING THE MEETING

DETERMINE NEED

1. Is there a need or a problem?
2. Does the topic lend itself to the meeting method?
3. Does it lend itself to a less expensive method?
4. Has the right climate for productive meetings been established?
5. If the problem solving meeting is indicated, will the thinking of the group be accepted or considered?
6. Is the topic timely?
7. Is it workable?
8. Is the topic one that the members can do something about?

PREPARE YOURSELF

1. Assemble and screen information.
2. Prepare outline in such detail and in such manner as the particular meeting may require. This outline may include one or more of the following:

   a. The topic or over-all objective.
   b. Immediate objectives.
   c. Definitions.
   d. A prepared opening statement.
   e. Points which may be discussed.
   f. Questions which may be asked.
   g. Examples and board work.

3. Assemble material. This may include the following:

   a. Written materials-instructions, orders, pamphlets, handouts, case studies, skits, etc.
   b. Graphic materials-charts, diagrams, graphs, posters, etc.
   c. Films, film strips, and slides.

PREPARE THE MEMBERS

1. Select the members
2. Notify the members and give them the necessary details, such as date and time, place, persons attending, topic of meeting, etc.

PREPARE THE MEETING PLACE

1. Check the room facilities - availability of room, heating, light, ventilation, arrangement of tables and chairs.
2. Check arrangements for demonstration materials - blackboard or chart pad; chalk, eraser, or crayon; film, film strips, or slides; projection equipment.
3. Check the facilities for convenience of members - pencils, papers, ash trays, name plates.

LEADING THE MEETING

PRESENT THE TOPIC

1. Start on time.
2. Put the group at ease.
3. Explain the plan of procedure, if it has not been established by previous meetings.
4. State the objective.
5. Arouse the interest of the members.

PRESENT OR GET FACTS AND IDEAS

1. In presenting facts, as in an informational meeting.
   a. emphasize important facts and ideas,
   b. show the relationship between ideas, and
   c. use expressive words which are within the vocabulary of the group
2. In getting facts and ideas
   a. start the discussion,
   b. keep the discussion moving and on the beam,
   c. use the thinking of all members, and
   d. use the blackboard.

EVALUATE FACTS AND IDEAS

1. Avoid obvious experting.
2. Encourage the group to weigh and analyze facts and ideas.
3. Get group agreement.
4. Summarize frequently.

DRAW CONCLUSIONS

1. Consider possible alternatives.
2. Select alternative.

DEVELOP PLAN

1. Determine plan of action.
2. Determine responsibilities in carrying out plan of action.
3. Final summary.
4. Close on time.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Prepare report if it serves a useful purpose and only in such detail as indicated by the meeting.

2. Complete follow-up assignments.

SESSION III

THE PROGRESS OF MEETINGS

SUMMARY SHEET

A. PURPOSES

1. To discuss methods which are effective in influencing the progress of meetings - statements, visual aids, questions, and the group.

2. To discuss the characteristics of VA staff meetings.

B. CONTENT OF SESSION

Topics for discussion	Pages
Introduction	26
Statements	26
Visual Aids	27
Questions	28
The Group	30
Characteristics of VA Staff Meetings	33
Closing	34

C. APPENDICES

Title	Pages
III-A (HO #4) Self-Appraisal List for Meeting Leaders	35
III-B (HO #5) Bibliography on Meetings	37
III-C Suggestions for Practice Meetings	39

SESSION III

THE PROGRESS OF MEETINGS

INTRODUCTION

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Introduction	In the first two sessions we discussed the responsibilities of the meeting members and the role of the meeting leader. In this session we shall be concerned with the question of the progress of the meeting. THE PROGRESS OF MEETINGS **Q. Certain methods have been found effective in influencing the progress of meetings in such ways as starting discussion or changing the direction or speed of discussion. What might these methods be?** - Statements - Visual aids - Questions - The [illegible]oup

STATEMENTS

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Uses of statements	**Q. What could we include under the term "statements"?** - facts - cases - opinions **Q. What are some of the ways in which statements can be used in a meeting?** - To start discussion - To channel discussion - To end discussion - To summarize

VISUAL AIDS

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Examples of visual aids	**Q. What are some examples of visual aids?** - Blackboard work - charts and graphs - diagrams - films - models - specimens - samples - exhibits - posters - photographs
Uses of visual aids	**Q. What are some of the uses of visual aids?** - To focus attention *When this use is mentioned, you can dramatize it by displaying a small object which you have placed in your pocket before the beginning of the session. Point out how all eyes focused on the object.* - To make points clear by showing a real object, showing motion, showing actual operations - To save time - To gain variety - To stimulate and organize discussion - To keep discussion on the track
Hints for use of the blackboard	**Q. The blackboard is the most readily accessible and inexpensive visual aid available to the leader. Can you suggest some hints for use of the blackboard?** - Try out blackboard work in advance - Plan proper sequence of board work - Place blackboard in best position - Condense material, at the same time making sure that the meaning is clear - At first opportunity erase material no longer needed - Avoid talking to blackboard - Don't stand in front of blackboard work

	- Write, print, or draw quickly, neatly, and legibly - Develop the board material while talking - Allow time for group to copy, where desirable - Keep board work flexible, so that adaptations can be made when necessary - Don't have too much board work
Cautions about visual aids	**Q. What cautions should be kept in mind about visual aids?** - They are auxiliary devices - Showing them is not the primary purpose of a meeting - They are a means and not an end

QUESTIONS

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Uses of questions	**Q. What are the uses of questions in influencing the progress of a meeting?** - To start discussion - To stimulate interest and thinking - To obtain information - To emphasize particular points - To change the direction of the discussion - To keep on the track or get back on the track - To clarify the thinking of the group - To summarize
Hints for effective questioning	**Q. The framing of questions that stimulate thinking and discussion and that bring forth significant responses is quite difficult, but there are a number of things that will help you to avoid the pitfalls that await the unwary. What are some of the things you can do that make for effective questioning?** - Show by the questions that you are interested and enthusiastic about the subject matter - Ask questions in a natural manner that indicates confidence in the members' ability to answer them - Don't antagonize - Don't put members on the spot. Try to ask questions which members will have the knowledge and ability to answer or which at least will not cause them embarrassment - Word questions clearly

- Ask questions which will be thought provoking. They shouldn't be so easy as to encourage slovenly thinking, nor so difficult as to discourage effort. Avoid questions that can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no"

- Ask questions with a definite purpose in mind

- give the group time to answer the questions

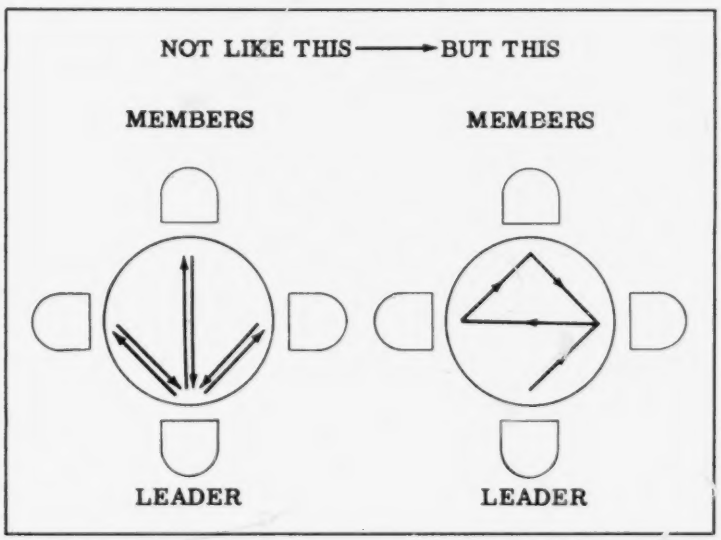
- If, after allowing sufficient time, the question isn't answered, rephrase it

- Listen to the answers. A good meeting leader is a good listener

- Preserve a neutral response to the answers. "That's one thought" rather than "That's right" or "That's wrong"

- Don't insist on being the switchboard through which all questions must flow. It is better for the group to be as self-sustaining as possible

To illustrate the caution on not being the "switchboard" you may wish to use the visual aid below.



Questions directed to the leader

Q. A point which arises, particularly in the problem solving meeting, is that of questions directed to the meeting leader. What should the leader do with such questions?

- In most cases he should direct the questions back to the group

- There are some situations when it is suitable for the leader to answer a question

Q. What are the situations when it is suitable for a leader to answer a question directed to him, and what are the cautions that should be observed?

- When the leader has some special knowledge about the subject

	The meeting leader can and should become a meeting member when he has special knowledge about the subject. However, he should first give the members an opportunity to offer the information. - When the topic has been fully explored and a conclusion reached The leader should emphasize, however, that it is only one man's opinion and that it is the opinion of the group which is important. - When it becomes unavoidable, as for example, when there is closely divided opinion in the group In such cases the leader should stress that it is his personal opinion, emphasize the merits of other positions, and try to turn the situation into judging what's right rather than who's right.

THE GROUP

Topical outline	Discussion Material
	The last method is by using the characteristics of the whole group and the individual group members.
Types of groups	**Q. Are there any types into which groups fall?** - The quick group - The slow group - The resistant group
	Q. What can the leader do with each of these groups to assist them to work effectively?
- The quick group	- The quick group a. Slow down group without squelching, if they are going too fast. b. Give it to them fast. c. Ask tough questions. d. Don't pit yourself against them. e. Let them argue ideas out with each other.
- The slow group	- The slow group a. Explain topic thoroughly. b. Do more telling than usual. c. Don't go too fast. d. Ask easy questions. e. Ask provocative questions; try to get them arguing. f. Find points of common agreement. g. Show enthusiasm yourself. h. Use effective aids to understanding.
- The resistant group	- The resistant group a. Indicate sympathetic understanding, but not necessarily agreement.

b. Try to find out the cause of resistance. If necessary, face issue frankly and ask "Why?"
c. Find responsive members and use them to swing the group
d. Seek angles of the topic that affect personal interests of some members

Types of individual situations

Of course a meeting group will not usually be consistent within itself, and the problems which arise, therefore, may be those due to individuals. You have probably met some of these problem children at meetings.

Q. Who are some of these problem children, and what can you do to get them working with the group?

As each type is suggested list it on the board. Ask for a brief description of the type and the things that the leader can do. A number of types are listed below to serve as background material for the discussion.

1. Overly-talkative

1. Overly-talkative	Show-off; eager beaver; or just plain gabby.

- Ask him difficult questions
- Cut across his talk with a summarizing statement and direct a question to someone else.

2. Highly argumentative

2. Highly argumentative	Combative personality; professional heckler; or upset by emotional problems.

- Try to find merit in one of his points and get agreement on it; then move on to something else.
- As a last resort, talk to him privately and see if you can win his cooperation.

3. Quick-helpful

3. Quick-helpful	Has right answers, but keeps others out.

- Cut across him tactfully by questioning others.
- Suggest, "Let's get several opinions".
- Use him to summarize.
- Be sure he understands you appreciate his help.

4. Rambler

4. Rambler	Talks about everything except subject; gets lost.

- When he stops for breath, thank him, rephrase one of his statements, and move on.
- Ask direct questions of others.
- Indicate in friendly manner that he is off the topic.
- Last resort - glance at watch.

5. Side conversationist

5. Side conversationist	May be related, but is always distracting.

- Pause and let others listen; it may be pertinent.
- First call him by name, then draw him into the discussion by asking for his opinion.
- First call him by name, then ask by direct question if he has something to add to the general discussion.

6. Poor voice or choice of words

6. Poor voice or choice of words	Voice not clear; can't find proper words; ideas may be good, but he can't convey them.

- Repeat his ideas in your own words, but say, "Let me repeat that" rather than, "What you mean is . . ."
- Protect him from ridicule.

7. Obstinate

7. Obstinate	Won't budge; prejudiced; may simply not see the point.

- Try to get others to help him see the point.
- If time is short, tell him frankly that it is necessary to get on with the meeting.

8. Griper

8. Griper	Pet peeve; professional griper; or may have legitimate complaint.

- Tell him the problem is how best to operate under the present system.
- Direct attention to topic of discussion.
- Indicate pressure of time.

9. Wrong subject

9. Wrong subject	Off-the-beam.

- Direct attention to topic of discussion.
- You might say, "Something I said may have thrown you off the subject, but the question we are considering at the moment is . . ."

10. Definitely wrong

10. Definitely wrong

- Say "That's one way of looking at it", and go on.
- Ask additional questions, such as "Would we be able to reconcile that with . . .?", but don't embarrass him.

11. Personality clash

11. Personality clash	A clash between two or more members.

- Emphasize points of agreement as much as possible.
- Cut across with direct question on topic.
- Bring a sound member into the discussion.
- Ask that personalities be left out.

12. Superior attitude

12. Superior attitude	Not disposed to help; attitude expressed by, "I had to find out the hard way, son. You do the same".

- Sell him on the fact that the meeting is a cooperative effort.
- Flatter him by telling him how much the others could benefit by his experience. Don't overdo it or the group will resent it.

13. Won't talk	13. Won't talk	Bored; indifferent; hesitant; insecure; afraid. Try to determine what is motivating him, and use one of the following approaches. - Find his interest. - Call on him for his experience or opinion. - Use direct, provocative questions. - Ask a direct question, which you are sure he can answer. - Ask for his agreement. - Compliment the sensitive person the first time he talks; be sincere. - If the sensitive person is seated near you, ask his opinion so that he'll feel he is talking to you rather than to the group.

CHARACTERISTICS OF VA STAFF MEETINGS

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Characteristics of the VA staff meeting	**Q. The typical VA staff meeting is the one with which we will be mostly concerned in our day-to-day work. What are some of the characteristics of the VA staff meeting?** - They are usually a mixture of types. - They are usually held on a regular basis. They should not be scheduled so often that they become thin or routine, nor so rigidly that they can't be skipped when there is no real need. - Usually it is known who will attend. This is an advantage for the leader, but he must be even more alert for personality clashes or problems which may be intensified by a series of meetings. - Generally they are less formal than the pure type of meeting. - Preparations generally need not be extensive. However, any meeting requires some preparation, and planning should not be overlooked. - The notice of the meeting need not be elaborate. The most important thing is for the members to know in advance, whenever possible, the items to be discussed. - In the staff mixed-purpose meeting the job of the meeting leader is more difficult than in the pure type of meeting. He must be able to adjust methods quickly. He will also be the supervisor of the group and will have special knowledge about the subject. To a much greater extent than usual he must be both a meeting leader and a meeting member. He mustn't dominate; but neither can he abdicate.

CLOSING

Topical outline	Discussion Material
Summary	*Ask one or more members to summarize the session if time permits.* Remember that meeting participation, for both the members and the leader cannot be reduced to a rigid formula. The meeting techniques require adaptation depending on the experience and capabilities of the individuals and the circumstances of the particular meeting. As we mentioned before, only with experience can you acquire the art of meeting participation, either as a member or a leader. To help you make this experience more fruitful we have two handouts. One is a "Self-Appraisal List for Meeting Leaders". This list is designed to help you improve as a meeting leader; many of the questions also indicate what to do to improve as a meeting member. The other handout is a bibliography in case you want to do any further reading.
HANDOUTS	*Distribute HO #4 (Appendix III-A), "Self-Appraisal List for Meeting Leaders", and HO#5 (Appendix III-B), "Bibliography on Meetings".* *Make necessary announcements for practice meetings. See Appendix III-C for suggestions on practice meetings.*
Close session	*Close session.*

APPENDIX III-A
(TG 5-18-1)

HO #4

SELF-APPRAISAL LIST FOR MEETING LEADERS

This scale will not give you a numerical score, nor will it tell you whether you are an excellent or a good meeting leader. Rather, it is designed to help you find out for yourself the areas where you need improvement. The scale may be used for periodic self-appraisal. Such self-examination may prevent you from becoming routinized in meeting practice. Periodic checks may also disclose errors or prevent the developing of habits of which you might otherwise be unaware. (In addition to self-appraisal the scale may be used for evaluating others. Many of the questions also indicate what to do to improve as a meeting member.)

For each question place a check in the appropriate column. A check in column 1 means that you feel you need improvement; one in column 2 means that you consider yourself satisfactory or better. A check in column 3 means that you feel that the question does not apply to the particular meeting on which you are rating yourself.

	COLUMN		
	1	2	3
1. Did I prepare in advance of the meeting?			
2. Did the notice of the meeting contain the necessary information?			
3. In particular did the notice give the topic and subordinate topics in enough detail to allow the members to prepare for the meeting?			
4. Were the room facilities (heat, light, ventilation, etc.), favorable to group discussion?			
5. Did I start on time?			
6. Could everybody see well and hear clearly?			
7. Was I at ease?			
8. Was I able to put the group at ease?			
9. Was my introductory statement clear and concise?			
10. Did the members understand the topic?			
11. Were the members aware of a real problem to be solved?			
12. Was the group interested in the topic?			
13. Was this interest sustained throughout the meeting?			
14. Was I able to keep the discussion moving and on-the-beam?			
15. Did all the members participate?			
16. Did I recognize points offered by the group?			
17. Did I encourage the group to analyze points as they were offered?			

	COLUMN		
	1	2	3
18. Did I avoid expressing my own opinions and dominating the situation?			
19. Did I display enthusiasm?			
20. Did I adapt my vocabulary to the group?			
21. Did I prevent a monopoly of the discussion by a few members?			
22. Did I check side tracking and lack of attention?			
23. How well did I handle, or let the group handle, other individual situations, such as the griper, the rambler, personality clashes, etc?			
24. Did I present pertinent and interesting case material?			
25. Were my questions well framed?			
26. Did my questions provoke discussion?			
27. Were my questions well distributed?			
28. Did I refer questions back to the group, rather than answer them myself?			
29. Did I make effective use of charts and other visual aids?			
30. Was my board work well planned and organized?			
31. Was my board work neat, legible, and quickly done?			
32. Did I budget time wisely during the meeting?			
33. Did I summarize periodically?			
34. Was there general acceptance or agreement by the group of the proposed action or solutions reached?			
35. Was a plan developed to put the group agreement into action?			
36. Did I summarize, or have the group summarize at the conclusion of the meeting?			
37. Did I close the meeting on time?			
38. Did I prepare a report of the meeting?			
39. Did I check to determine that the follow-up assignments were completed?			

APPENDIX III-B
(TG 5-18-1)

HO #5

BIBLIOGRAPHY ON MEETINGS

AMERICAN MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION. A Guide to Successful Conference Leadership. New York, 1948.

BUSCH, HENRY M. Conference Methods in Industry. New York: Harper and Bros., 1949.

Conference Leadership. Civilian Personnel Pamphlet No. 32, Department of the Army. Washington, D. C., 1949.

Conference Leadership. Esso Standard Oil Company, Esso Training Center Publication, 1947. (Digests appear in Personnel 24:328-340, March 1948, and Personnel 25:31-46, July 1948.)

DALE, EDGAR and SPAULDING, SETH, editors. How to Have a Successful Conference. Columbus, Ohio State University, 1950.

FISHER, WALDO E. Conference Leader's Guide. Pasadena: California Institute of Technology, 1948.

GLASS, JOSEPH G. How to Plan Meetings and Be A Successful Chairman. New York: Merlin Press, Inc., 1951.

HANNAFORD, E. S. Conference Leadership in Business and Industry. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1945.

HEGARTY, E. J. How to Run A Meeting. New York, McGraw-Hill, 1947.

HEROLD, DON. How to Harness A Conference. Hammermill Paper Company, Erie, Pa., 1942.

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE BOARD, INC. Techniques of Conference Leadership. Studies in Personnel Policy, No. 77. New York, 1951.

STRAUSS, BERT and STRAUSS, FRANCES. New Ways to Better Meetings. New York: The Viking Press, 1951.

UTTERBACK, WILLIAM E. Group Thinking and Conference Leadership. New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1950.

These are just a few of the books and pamphlets on meetings. Through your local library facilities you can refer to these and other sources.

APPENDIX III-C
(TG 5-18-1)

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICE MEETINGS

The following suggestions are offered for conducting the practice meetings:

I. PRACTICE ON THE PREPARATION OF A MEETING OUTLINE

1. Place on the board the item headings for the meeting outline below and review briefly--

MEETING OUTLINE
1. The topic or over-all objective.
2. Immediate objectives.
3. Definitions.
4. Opening statement.
5. Points which may be discussed.
6. Questions which may be asked.
7. Examples and board work.

2. Ask the trainees to think of a suitable topic or to choose one from a list of suggestions. A topic which poses a problem is preferable for the purpose of the practice meeting. A list of suggestions could include such items as the following:

   a. What should the supervisor do to orient new employees?

   b. What should be included in an inventory of the duties of a supervisor?

   c. How can time and effort be budgeted?

   d. How can the supervisor best carry out his responsibility for on-the-job training?

3. Have the trainees prepare a meeting outline using the material on the board as a guide. Caution them that the outline is a guide and should be prepared only in such detail as required by the topic.

4. Circulate among the trainees and assist them during this preparation.

5. Call for volunteers to lead the practice meetings at the next session or make assignments.

6. Schedule the remaining trainees.

7. Suggested time: $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

II. PRACTICE MEETINGS

1. Have trainees conduct meetings in order determined above. If practice in preparing meeting outlines is not used, prior arrangements should be made for selection of leaders and topics.

2. Suggested time: 15 minutes for practice meeting and 15 minutes for evaluation. Cut off both the practice meeting and the evaluation when the allotted time has been reached.

3. Participation of group members: Request the group members to participate as helpfully as possible to carry out their member responsibilities and to enhance the confidence of the leader. Ask them also to keep certain points in mind so that they can offer constructive criticism of the conduct of the leader.

4. Evaluation: Before each practice meeting select 6 to 10 points from the Self-Appraisal List for Meeting Leaders, Appendix III-A. Ask the members to concentrate their post-meeting criticism on these points. This will make it easier for the members to perform their dual function.

   Explain that the practice meetings will be too short for most of them to reach the objective. Point out that the primary factor is the progress of the meeting toward the objective; the secondary factor is the use of the techniques. As an example, everybody may be participating furiously, but this is useless if the discussion is standing still. Ask the group to keep in mind that criticisms of the leader should also be examined to determine whether they are criticisms of the members.

5. Problem situations: If desired, role playing may be used in the later practice meetings, provided the group agrees to this experiment. Ask for volunteers to play the roles of "problem children", such as the very talkative member, the shy person, or the employee with a gripe. It is suggested that leaders be rotated for each demonstration of a problem situation. The group should then discuss what devices the leaders used, which were successful, and what other devices might have been used?

6. Number of practice meetings: It is strongly recommended that each person in the group be allowed to lead at least two practice meetings. More, of course, can be arranged, when necessary.

7. Other variations:

   a. Use of observers: It is difficult for a person to participate in a meeting and to observe the meeting at the same time. One way to avoid this problem is to ask two or three trainees to act as observers. After the practice meeting is finished they are called upon to evaluate the performance of both the leader and the members.

   b. Use of recording devices: A device can be used to record the practice meeting. After it is played back the trainees can evaluate themselves as well as the other persons. The evaluation should be in terms of the "Self-Appraisal List for Meeting Leaders," rather than in terms of diction or other matters relating to public speaking.

   c. Use of "buzz groups": A large training group can be split into "buzz groups" and several practice meetings held at the same time. The entire training group can be reassembled for the evaluation portion. If this technique is used, be sure that enough space is available so that the "buzz groups" don't interfere with one another.

ERIC Clearinghouse
JUL 11 1973
on Adult Education

292716